

“Serving Those Who Served”

Call 1-800-562-2308 for Statewide assistance

www.dva.wa.gov

Vol. 5 Issue 18

WINTER 2004

VOLUNTEERS make Holidays Happy for Residents of the Veterans Homes

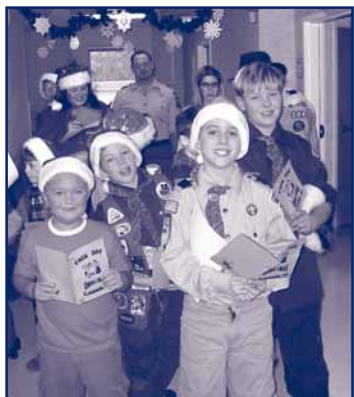
For several hundred veterans in Washington State, the holidays were spent in a home of a different kind - a State Veterans Home. And thanks to the commitment and dedication of a cadre of volunteers, this year's festivities were second to none!

In Spokane, even a flu outbreak couldn't stop Santa! While large holiday gatherings were postponed to reduce the chance of spreading the virus, Santa Claus made a personal visit to each resident on December 23. Santa distributed several hundred gifts and spent time watching residents open them. Residents thoroughly enjoyed the day and many made sure Santa knew they had "never stopped believing"!

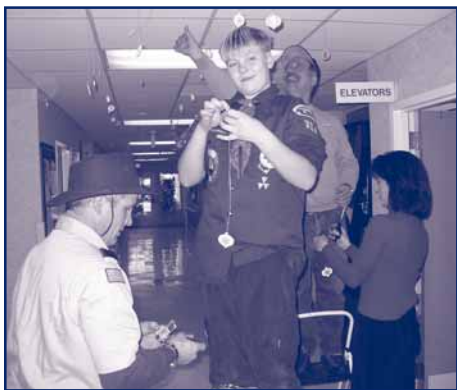
This year's holiday planning received a jump-start with an unexpected call from the Spokane Visitors Bureau. The Bureau adopted each of the 90 or so residents of the Spokane Veterans Home and collected information such as clothing and shoe size as well as other gift ideas on their wish lists! In addition, the Marine Corps Reserves

donated stuffed animals to residents delivered by none other than the Young Marines.

Veterans were also treated to concerts by a



Local Boy Scouts "decked the halls" and sang carols to the Spokane residents.



Santa Claus distributed gifts to each resident.

Hand Bell Choir from the Spokane Valley Seventh-Day Adventist Church, the Golden West Wins from Travis Air Force Base, and the decorating talents of a local Boy Scout Troop who spent two days decorating hallways and caroling in the dining rooms at lunch time.

At Retsil, the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) again came through providing residents with a wonderful holiday. Shipyard employees took resident wish lists and made sure that every resident received five gifts of their choice! Sixty volunteers from the shipyard assisted with five holiday parties. Parties were held in the activity building, and on each floor of the nursing care buildings. Santa and Mrs. Claus, played by Roy and Peggy Luxton of the Aberdeen Elks, made the rounds to every single party!

In the activity building twenty volunteers served cookies and eggnog while everyone enjoyed music by the Wolfe Sisters. Lee Ison, the PSNS holiday gift coordinator, was presented with a special award for non-veteran volunteer of the year, by the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory

Committee (VAAC). The Aberdeen Elks presented the Veterans Home with a framed picture of the Vietnam Memorial Wall for the new building. Gifts were then passed out to all of the residents. Residents were also treated to holiday carols by Opera Jenny Reuter, Celebrant Singers and a private violin concert by Nancy Prante, former Veterans Home employee.

In addition, the Rainbow Girls, from Port Orchard Assembly #61, visited the home to decorate cookies. The girls stayed and socialized with residents for some time and enjoyed a great day of sharing snacks and stories.

On December 16th, Santa's Elves (otherwise known as American Legion Auxiliary members) came to fill stockings for Christmas. These ladies filled 143 stockings, which were distributed to each resident in buildings 9 and 10 on Christmas morning. This year the organization helped Santa's budget by purchasing items and collecting donations to fill the stockings.

At the Soldiers Home, over 20 caroler groups entertained during this holiday season. There were church groups, boy scouts, girl scouts, and numerous others who went through the halls singing holiday carols.

The Puyallup Elks held a wonderful



Lori Stocker and her children Kyle, Isaac and Natasha entertained everyone at the Orting party.

Continued on page 12

What's Inside...

<i>Volunteers Make the Holidays Happy</i>	<i>page 1</i>
<i>Director's Message</i>	<i>page 2</i>
<i>Outstanding Service Awards</i>	<i>page 3</i>
<i>In the Spotlight...Gary Clark</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Field Services Division Update</i>	<i>page 5</i>
<i>In Focus... VIEW</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>WA Veterans Homes Highlights</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>National Notes</i>	<i>page 10</i>
<i>Hats Off</i>	<i>page 12</i>

Washington State
Dept of Veterans Affairs
PO Box 41150
1011 Plum St, 2nd Floor
Olympia, WA 98504-1150

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

Veteran Voices is published for Washington state veterans and their family members, WDVA employees and Veterans Home residents.

Volume 5, Issue 18
WINTER 2004

Governor
Gary Locke

WDVA Director
John M. King

Public Relations & Legislative Manager
Heidi Audette

Public Information Officer
Colleen Gilbert

Graphic Designer
Miriam Young

Call 1-877-VETS-R-US
(877-838-7787) for an application to the veterans homes.



Publication Information

Please submit comments, articles and address changes electronically to:
colleen@dva.wa.gov
(360) 725-2180 or
miriam@dva.wa.gov
(360) 725-2169
or mail to:
Veteran Voices
PO Box 41150 Olympia,
WA 98504.
Articles must be received by the 1st of March, June, Sept., and Dec., for consideration in the next issue.

Publication of articles is at the discretion of the *Veteran Voices* editorial board.

When credit is given to the source, articles from the *Veteran Voices* may be reprinted.

To obtain this publication in an alternative format call (360) 725-2169.

Director's Message

Advocating... For You!



John M. King
WDVA Director

Washington Veterans are represented by a number of tireless advocates, primarily the Veterans Legislative Coalition (VLC). Working behind the scenes, groups of veteran

leaders pound the pavement visiting with legislators, following committee hearing schedules, and testifying before elected officials to ensure the rights and benefits of veterans are recognized.

Even before state legislators convened in Olympia for the 2004 Session, several dozen veteran leaders attended a hearing of the Joint Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs to make their priorities clear. Ranging from property tax exemptions to college tuition waivers, members of the VLC testified on what is important to veterans in our state.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of all our State's veteran advocates, this is an exciting time in Washington. This year, the state is not looking at how deep programs must be cut. The focus for WDVA is what we must do to plan for the needs of veterans, today and into the future. I appreciate how veteran leaders are staying involved and connected with what is happening both in the state legislature and in Congress.

Your representatives on the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) and VLC are listed on our web page at www.dva.wa.gov. Or you can contact YOUR Department of Veterans Affairs for information and updates on veterans legislation.

WDVA Contact
E-Mail: heidia@dva.wa.gov
Call: (360) 725-2154
Log On: www.dva.wa.gov.

A Place to Call Home

For those of you who have built your own home, worked in the construction industry, or watched a large construction project, you can appreciate the sense of awe and excitement as the project began to take shape. Veterans and staff members at Retsil are witnessing the construction of the largest Veterans Home in Washington history and each day brings new and exciting changes.

We began the project in 2002 and it is scheduled to be complete in Spring 2005. Veterans who call Retsil home will have the comfort of rooms with privacy, additional windows, natural lighting, and the feeling of living in a neighborhood - not a nursing home. Care provided in each of the State Veterans Homes is second to none, and the care will only be enhanced by the new accommodations at Retsil.



Now is an exciting time in our Homes' History! If you would like to get involved, visit us on-line, give us a call, or arrange a visit. You can also contribute through a special donation account, established by the veterans at Retsil, to purchase courtyard furniture that will allow veterans to enjoy the great outdoors - in their own backyard!

Contact Information
Retsil Administration: (360) 895-4700
Web Site: www.dva.wa.gov

I (we) would like to contribute to the courtyards at the WA Veterans Home. Enclosed is my/our gift of:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1,000 Other _____

Name (s): _____

(Please print as you would like to be acknowledged)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: Retsil Construction Project
Send to: Retsil Construction Project, PO Box 41150, Olympia, WA 98504-1150
Thank you.

Your gifts are tax-deductible.

Citizens Recognized for Service to Veterans

This Veterans Day, several Washington residents were honored as they received Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards for their contributions to Washington state's veterans and their families during the last year.

The awards - co-sponsored each year by the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) and the state Department of Veterans Affairs - recognize individuals who devote time and energy to improving the lives of Washington's veteran community.

OUTSTANDING VETERAN

VOLUNTEER - Milton Till is a WWII Navy Veteran. In 1992, he organized a VFW volunteer honor guard detail to provide graveside services for deceased Veterans in the area and in 1997 became active with the Tahoma National Cemetery Honor Guards. Till currently serves as Chairman of the Tahoma National Cemetery Support Group.



VAAC Chair George Edmundson and Milton Till.

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE

OFFICER - Joy Finley is a trained post volunteer service officer with American Legion's Post 92, and spends 30-40 hours per week helping Veterans with claims. Married to a Vietnam Marine Corps Veteran, Finley started volunteering with veterans when her husband was awarded 100% disability by the VA, and says "Helping veterans with their claims is my way of giving back to a system that helped my family when we needed help."



VAAC Chair George Edmundson and Joy Finley.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE OFFICER

Court Fraley is the State Service Director for the VFW, Dept. of Wash., responsible for the training of the VFW Service Officers, the statewide network of the VFW Post Service Officers, and the delivery of claims-assistance services to thousands of Veterans and their family members throughout Washington.



Court Fraley.

His dedication to America's veterans grew out of his years of experience in the U.S. Marine Corps, and especially during his combat experiences in Vietnam.

OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE



VAAC Chair George Edmundson and David Peterson.

David Peterson is a senior review officer with the Federal VA, where his 30 plus years of experience have proven invaluable to many veterans and their families, particularly in the areas of PTSD and POW claims.

"David Peterson has to be one of the most hardworking VA Regional Office employees," said Tom Schumacher, WDVA's PTSD manager. "He is dedicated to high ethical and moral standards. He is known by many as someone who truly gives to others until it hurts. No finer person could be nominated for this award."

OUTSTANDING MALE NON-VETERAN - Lee Ison, an employee at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, last year coordinated the holiday gift program at the Washington Veterans Home in Retsil, providing each of the more than 300 residents with 5 gifts of their choice. Ison has agreed to coordinate this year's holiday gift program as well.



Deputy Director John Lee congratulates Lee Ison.

OUTSTANDING FEMALE NON-VETERAN - Ora Roby has been working as an AMVET service officer and operating the AMVET service office within the Madigan Army Medical center complex for the past 13 years. She provides bereavement



VAAC Chair George Edmundson and Ora Roby.

counseling and compensation submission to widows, service connected disability compensation counseling and submission, as well as providing services for active duty service members proceeding through medical boards at Madigan.

OUTSTANDING LEGISLATOR - Senator Paull Shin represents the 21st Legislative District and serves on the Joint Legislative Committee on Veteran and Military Affairs. Shin is the sponsor of many bills designed to improve the lives of Washington's Veterans, as well as active duty military, National Guard and reservists.

SPECIAL AWARD OF MERIT - Dan Gogerty has provided a lifetime of service to



Director John King and Senator Paull Shin.

his country, his community, and veterans. Following his service in the Marine Corps, he worked for the Seattle Police Department. After retiring, he began his work on behalf of veterans and their families. Gogerty has served as the Chairman of the Veterans Legislative Coalition for the State of Washington for the last 8 years.



VAAC Chair George Edmundson and Dan Gogerty.

The VLC is comprised of representatives from all the major Veterans Service Organizations within Washington State and under Gogerty's leadership and direction is responsible for several significant outcomes on behalf of veterans and their families.

The honorees were presented during the annual Veterans Day Parade in Auburn on Nov. 8, and again honored at a luncheon at the Auburn Senior Center later that day.

Nomination forms for next year's awards can be obtained from the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs by calling (360) 725-2153 or on-line at www.dva.wa.gov.

"THANK THE VET"

If you appreciate your freedom?
Thank the Vet.
If you enjoy the privilege
Of casting a private ballot,
Thank the Vet.
If you look with pride
As our Nation's flag flies high?
Thank the Vet.
If you live in peace
As you bow in prayer?
Thank the Vet.
If you have the right
To speak your mind?
Thank the Vet.
If your heart and soul cries
Over loved ones lost?
Thank the Vet.
If you share the blessings
Of being an American?
Thank the Vet.
If you enjoy these blessings
And much much more...
THANK THE VET!

Robert J. Darrigan
Federal Way, Washington

In The Spotlight

“Serving Those Who Have Served” takes on new meaning when the service provider and recipient share a similar background. At the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, the number of employees who are veterans ranks high, providing a personal connection with clients not always achieved in other agencies.

In an effort to introduce these dedicated employees, WDVA will highlight a different veteran/employee each issue.

Air Force veteran Gary Clark joined WDVA in 1997, as a member of the King County Veterans Incarcerated Program in Seattle. His job requires spending many hours each week at the King County Jail, where he visits



Gary Clark, VBS

with veterans who find themselves on the wrong side of the law. It's Clark's responsibility to determine whether these veterans would benefit from being placed into a treatment program that might help break the cycle of recidivism that keeps landing them in jail.

“The bonus of the job is having the judge agree to put the veteran into treatment,” said Clark. “The disappointment of the job is that sometimes a veteran lies about wanting help.”

Clark's varied career began at age 19. “I really wanted to join the Navy,” said Clark, “but, during a poker game that involved

alcohol and excluded academic geniuses, 7 of us voted to join the Air Force.”

Of the seven, only three actually honored the vote. “The three of us entered the Air Force in 1962 under the buddy program. We thought that meant we'd stay together during the four years of service.”

After eight weeks, the buddies were each sent their separate ways, and Clark spent 3 ½ years controlling interceptors at Malmstrom AFB in Great Falls, Montana.

“Great Falls had great fishing, one drive-in theater that was closed 6 months of the year and one theater downtown that was always filled. Hoping to get away from there, I volunteered to go to Saigon or Turkey, the U.S. bases farthest east and west of Great Falls.”

After receiving a letter denying his transfer due to the cost of training a replacement, he finished out his service time



Gary Clark in 1962 at Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi.

and after his discharge in 1966, used his G.I. to go back to school in California and received his Masters in education and administration. After spending a number of years teaching college, Clark eventually spent more than 15 years in Mortgage Lending, transferring to Marysville, WA in 1994.

Looking for a change, Clark began volunteering at St. Vincent De Paul and started realizing that many of those needing assistance were veterans. He met Woody Woodruff in his search for somewhere to refer these veterans, which led to his going to work for the Everett VFW in their homeless and at-risk veterans outreach program. Eventually this led to his current position with WDVA. “I'm grateful to be doing something every day that allows me to learn, experience and try to help others,” said Clark when asked about his job.

Clark is the proud father of two, grandfather of three boys ages 13, 5 and 3, and he and his wife have been married for 36 years.



Veteran Voices Available On-Line

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs is now able to offer veterans and subscribers of *Veteran Voices* the option of reading the quarterly newsletters via e-mail.

Not only will this help WDVA reduce costs, it will allow readers to receive the *Voices* before hard copies are printed and mailed!

To distribute the *Voices* electronically via e-mail, we at WDVA will compile the e-mail addresses of those who wish to access the *Voices* via our Web site on the Internet. Then, every three months we will send that group of readers an e-mail message with the link to

click on to view the current edition of the *Voices* on the WDVA Web site, at www.dva.wa.gov.

Many people are already reading the newsletter from this location.

We ask that all readers take the opportunity to let us know if you would like to receive the newsletter electronically, or continue to receive it by mail. WDVA will assuredly continue to mail copies out to readers unless informed otherwise.

Please complete the form below and mail to WDVA or respond by e-mail to Miriam Young at Miriam@dva.wa.gov or Colleen Gilbert at colleen@dva.wa.gov. Questions? Call 1-800-562-0132 and ask for Miriam, Colleen or Heidi!

**Please mail to:
WDVA Publications
P.O. Box 41150
Olympia WA 98504-1150**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: (Please print legibly) _____ Phone Number: _____

I would like to receive the WDVA *Veteran Voices* via (please check one box):

☐

E-mail message reminder quarterly (send to my e-mail address listed above)

☐

Hard copy through the U.S. Mail (continue mailing to my street address above)

COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR TOPICS IN UPCOMING ISSUES: _____

WDVA Field Services Division

Veterans in Washington have access to a number of services and programs designed to provide assistance. The following information will provide a summary of the resources available.

The WDVA Seattle **Veteran Services Office** is based out of the VA Regional Office. Staff members work as service officers for veterans who need help filing VA claims and as community coordinators who travel to communities and work directly with veterans. In addition to our staff members, WDVA contracts with seven Veterans Service Organizations (with numerous post and chapter locations) and eight Independent Contractors (Service Officers). This network of service providers is spread across Washington State and is instrumental in helping veterans get the help they need without driving long distances.

The **Veterans Estate Management Program** is based in the Olympia Service Center. The Federal VA, for a variety reasons (examples are chronic homelessness and drug or alcohol abuse), can rate a veteran as being "incompetent" to handle their personal finances. A fiduciary, such as WDVA, is appointed to ensure a veteran's basic living needs are met, often preventing them from

becoming homeless. A team of six staff provide these fiduciary services.

Veterans needing **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder** (PTSD) counseling can use WDVA's a one-of-a-kind outreach and counseling program designed to provide confidential counseling services to more than 70,000 Washington state veterans with war-era and PTSD-related problems. Under the PTSD Program Manager's direction, WDVA contracts with 26 specialized counselors to help veterans resolve their war-related PTSD readjustment issues.

Also housed in the Olympia Service Center are the **Homeless Veteran Grant Programs**. Through Federal Department of Labor grants, WDVA received \$249,565 to serve homeless women veterans and \$300,000 to serve all homeless veterans. Staff member coordinate with a variety of service providers and non-profit organizations to assist veterans in seeking necessary counseling, housing assistance and most importantly employment opportunities. Each grant is based on the principle of stopping the cycle of homelessness by helping veterans become employable.

The newest initiative in the **Field**

Services division is a partnership with DSHS to ensure eligible veterans or widows receive Aid & Attendance benefits from the Federal VA. WDVA & DSHS are actively searching for these veterans & widows in nursing homes in Washington State. To date nine veterans have been removed from the Medicaid roles and been placed under total VA financial responsibility at a savings of \$58,000 in Medicaid resources. More than 70 veterans and surviving spouses have been enrolled into third party liability programs, saving DSHS over \$14,000 of Medicaid resources per month.

In King County, veterans facing jail time can be served by the **Veteran Incarcerated Program** (VIP) a joint project between the King County Veterans Program and WDVA. These staff members identify incarcerated veterans, and if they are eligible, enroll them in the program. Outcomes are measured by early release days (10,169) with a savings of (\$787,792) and a recidivism rate of (16%) compared to the current rate of recidivism of over 50% in 2002.

As always, if you know a veteran who needs assistance or just has some questions about VA benefits, please have them call 1-800-562-2308.

CONTACTS

WDVA Employees

Richard Stewart, Program Mgr
360-710-1390 (C)
richards@dva.wa.gov

and

Lynda Reese, VBS
vsolrees@vba.va.gov

and

Willie Slusarski, VBS
VSOWSLUS@vba.va.gov
206-220-6145/FAX:206-220-4667
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1050
Seattle, WA 98174

Jerry Pfannenstiel, VCSC
360-257-5756/FAX:360-257-1186
Pager:800-986-0790
gerald@dva.wa.gov
4278 Hollydale Lane
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Lonnie James, VCSC
509-457-2736/509-457-0951
lonniej@dva.wa.gov
1111 North First St, Suite 1
Yakima, WA 98901

Contract VSOs Hours M-F 8-4

Sidney Lee - AAPTSD
Tacoma/ VARO Seattle
253-589-0766/Fax:253-589-0769
tacomaaptsd@earthlink.com
www.aaptsdassn.com
12209 Pacific Hwy, SW
Lakewood, WA 98499
Or 915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1062B
Seattle, WA 98174

Bob Wallace - AL VARO
206-220-6223/1-877-249-4386
FAX 206-220-6104
alwall@vba.va.gov
www.walegion.org
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1042
Seattle, WA 98174

Sharon Vogel - AMVETS VARO
206-220-6244/FAX 206-220-6122
amvsvogal@vba.va.gov
www.amvets.org
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1062D
Seattle, WA 98174

Duane Hughes - MOPH VARO
206-220-6230/FAX 206-220-6207
mophdhugh@vba.va.gov
www.purpleheart.org
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1062C
Seattle, WA 98174

Raymond Miller - NABVETS
206-322-2618/FAX:206-322-2886
rrmiller101@aol.com
www.nabvets.com
2301 S. Jackson, Suite 103
Seattle, WA 98144

Court Fraley - VFW VARO
206-220-6191/1-877-805-1331
FAX:206-220-6241
vfwcfral@vba.va.gov
www.vfw.org
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1044
Seattle, WA 98174

Manning Becker - VVA VARO
206-220-6731/1-877-292-8735
FAX: 206-220-4669
vvambeck@vba.va.gov
www.vva.org
915 2nd Avenue, Rm 1058
Seattle, WA 98174

Contract Service Officers Hours M-F 8-4

Rene Taculad - VFW Everett
Snohomish, Skagit, Island
Counties
425-252-2100/FAX:425-339-1976
renet@dva.wa.gov
2711 Oakes Avenue
Everett, WA 98201

Mary Davis - AL
Tacoma & Pierce County
253-966-1280/253-967-7106
FAX: 253-966-1278
vsomdavi2@vba.va.gov
Waller Hall, Room 700
Fort Lewis, WA 98433

Michael Casaway - AL
Tacoma & Pierce County
253-583-1300/FAX:253-589-4069
mikec@olywa.net
American Lake VAMC
Bldg. 16A, Room 111
Tacoma, WA 98493

Davie Gibson - AL
Vancouver & Skamania, Clark,
Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Pacific
Counties
360-690-0274/360-696-4061
xt 3411 FAX: 360-737-1421
davieg@dva.wa.gov
1603 E. 4th Plain Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98661

Allan Shandera - AL
Spokane & Ferry, Stevens, Pend
Oreille, Spokane, Lincoln, Adams,
Whitman Counties
509-434-7750/FAX:509-434-7127
alashan@vba.va.gov
Spokane VAMC
4815 N. Assembly, Bldg. 6A
Spokane, WA 98205-6197

Ken Hix - AL, DAV, VFW
Chelan, Douglas & Okanogan
Counties / T-W-TH 8-4
509-689-3666(H)
509-733-0001 (C)
dorothyhix@hotmail.com

Ben Butkovich / T-W-TH 10-4
Kittitas County Veterans Coalition
Kittitas & Yakima Counties
509-933-2932/FAX:509-933-2963
kcvetcl@kvalley.com
www.cvcwashington.org
413 N. Main St., Suite O
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Fred Kogin / W 8-4
Grays Harbor County
360-533-9283/FAX:360-538-2391
wdva@techline.com
511 West Heron
Aberdeen, WA 98520

Jim Pace - VVA / T-W-TH 8-4
San Juan & Whatcom Counties
360-733-9226/FAX:360-733-9117
jp pace35@msn.com
Vet Center
3800 Byron, Suite 124
Bellingham, WA 98226

John Waterbrook - WDVA
Walla Walla County
509-525-6240/FAX:509-527-6110
joh@bmi.net
Walla Walla VAMC
77 Wainwright Dr., Bldg. 77,
Rm 109
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Jane Adamson - WDVA
WA Soldiers Home
360-893-4500
1301 Orting-Kapowsin Hwy
Orting, WA 98360



Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington is an organization committed to helping disabled and homeless veterans by providing work adjustment training, work therapy, job placement services, transitional employment, emergency housing, transitional housing, and independent living services.

recycle: to recover useful materials from; to recondition and adapt to a new use



Ray Switzer,
Executive
Director

For more than 15 years, the Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington (VIEW) has quietly gone about the business of recycling items that have too often become thought of as disposable: respirators, safety goggles, people.

“Who we are is all about what we do,” according to VIEW’s executive director Ray Switzer.

Incorporated in 1988, VIEW is an organization committed to helping disabled and homeless veterans by providing work adjustment training, work therapy, job placement services, transitional employment and transitional housing.

To be eligible, a veteran must meet the HUD definition of homeless. From there,

any potential applicant should contact VIEW’s clinical staff or outreach about his/her individual circumstances. Even if an applicant may not fully qualify for immediate admission to the program, VIEW’s clinical staff may be able to direct the applicant to appropriate help from the VA, community organizations, or treatment programs that may qualify him/her in the future.

Once veterans have completed acute treatment, they must have a stated goal of continued abstinence from drugs and/or alcohol and show a willingness to participate in relapse prevention groups. Recent studies indicate that veterans with substance abuse disorders are 3.4 times more likely to become homeless than their non-substance abusing counterparts.

Then they are admitted to the VIEW therapeutic residence program, where they work at meaningful jobs, with real-world

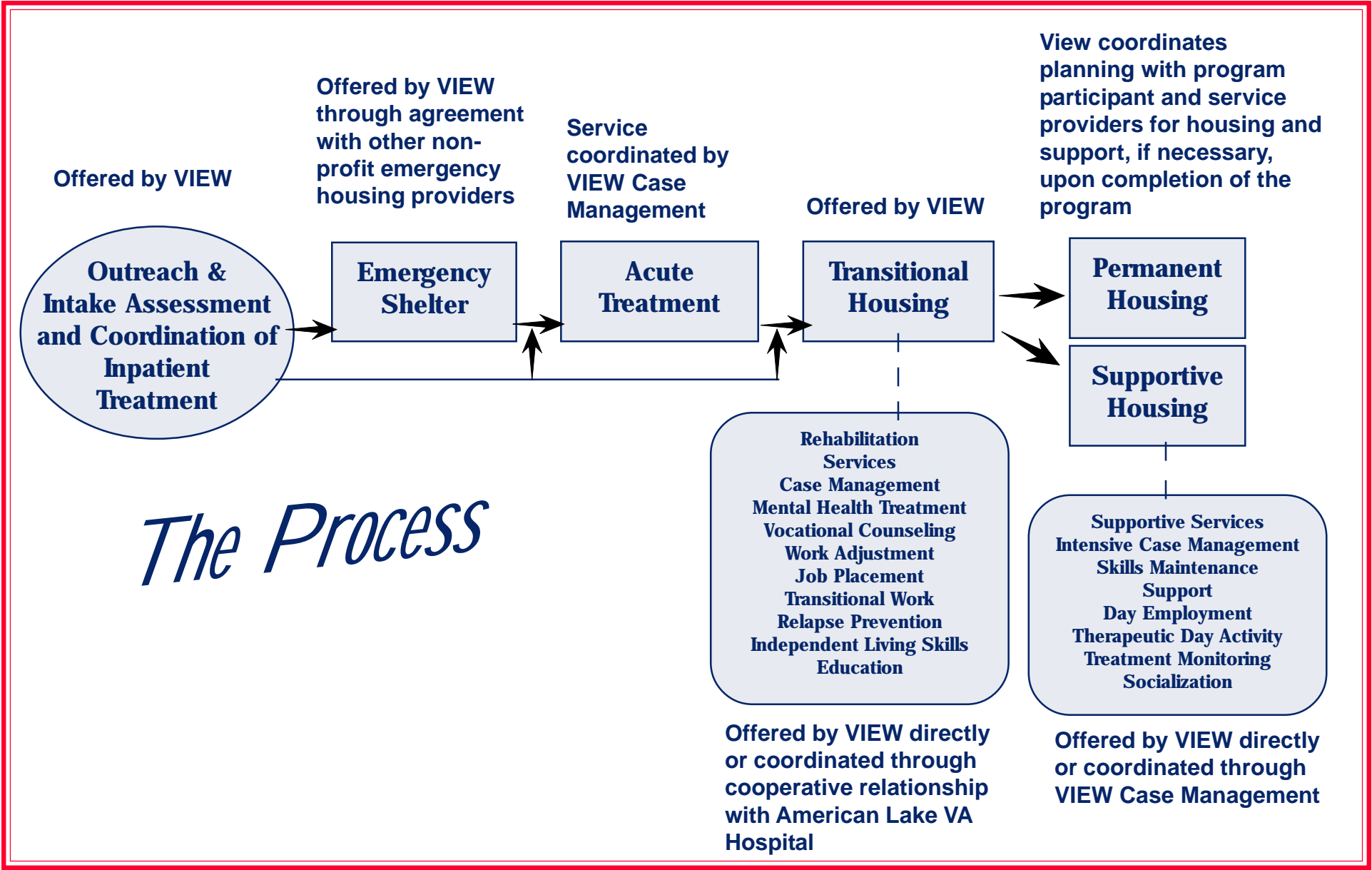
wages, have safe housing and unlimited counseling with as little institutional interference as possible.

In return, they are expected to work hard at the necessary small steps needed to successfully recover their health and self-esteem. To stay in the program they must adhere to a contract signed at admission, which includes passing regular and random urine tests. Another condition is that their work time at VIEW is exempt from unemployment claims, should they choose to leave the program.

How does Switzer measure success? “Where is the person after they leave here? Are they gainfully employed? Our success factor is related to the job. When a person leaves here clean and sober and has the ability to support themselves in housing, they can make it.”

Mission Statement

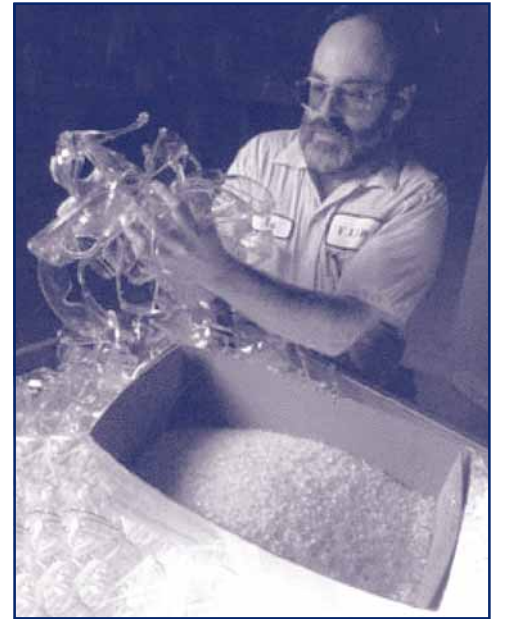
“We offer Veterans Life Changing Opportunities through Transitional Housing and Work, Life Skills and Diverse Support Services.”



ndent Enterprises of Washington



The program is work-oriented. All veterans in the program must be able to participate in work therapy. Veterans supplement their previous work experience with skills related to paint shop, powder coating, refurbishing, parts assembly and machine work. VIEW can employ up to 75 veterans in the 12- to 18-month program.



One of VIEW's major recycling projects involves the refurbishing or recycling of painting respirators and safety goggles used by Boeing.

VIEW Showed Me the Way

I was referred to the VIEW program in December of 1994 by a Veterans Hospital inpatient alcohol treatment center in Seattle, Washington. Drinking alcohol and being homeless for several months, I was in desperate need of a

"I have my own apartment, a job that I love and I'm still thirsty."

workable life. During the intake interview with the staff at Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington, I was told I would never have to take another drink or be homeless again, if I would be willing to meet certain conditions. These conditions included; signing a contract agreeing to work in the VIEW production shops for a minimum of six months, staying drug and alcohol free, living in a VIEW clean and sober residence, paying my own rent from money I earned working in the VIEW shops, saving a minimum of twenty dollars a week (to secure housing with once I exited the program), attending at least two outside support groups per week, attending one on one counseling, as well as group counseling at the VIEW facility, conducting a job search in the community to secure permanent meaningful employment.

To be honest, the job and the home were what appealed to me the most. It wasn't until later on that I realized with

my particular problem (alcoholism) I couldn't hang on to either a home or a job without all the other elements of the program. Over the course of the next 16 months with the guidance and support of the VIEW program I gathered together a set of very important tools. The tools I needed to build a workable life.

Through working in the shops I built my self esteem, my self confidence and a sense of pride by meeting my deadlines and in a job well done. Personal responsibility and self respect returned from the paying of my rent, food and personal items. The counseling sessions gave me what I think is my most important tool, the ability to communicate. The ability to be honest with myself and others. Not to mention, the camaraderie and friendships that evolved with the other veterans in the program. The best part is that I did it for myself.

The VIEW program doesn't change your life for you, but rather leads you to the path. You must walk down it yourself. You know the saying; "you can lead a horse to water". Well, I was lead to the water and I drank. As a matter of fact it has been two and one half years that I have been clean and sober. I have my own apartment, a job that I love and I'm still thirsty. The VIEW program has taught me that it takes a lot more to stay clean and sober then to just not drink.

THANKS VIEW.

Bob Brown

Contact VIEW

VIEW Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington
4630 16th St East, Suite B-16
Fife, WA 98424
(253) 922-5802

www.veteransworkshop.org

Executive Director:

Ray Switzer, Executive Director
switzer@veteransworkshop.org

Operations Manager:

Eric Hancock, Operations Manager
ehancock@veteransworkshop.org

Outreach Contact:

Mr. Dennis Brown, Criminal Justice Liaison

Clinical Director:

Mr. Dwight Randolph, MA, MPA, CDS III, Director of Clinical Services

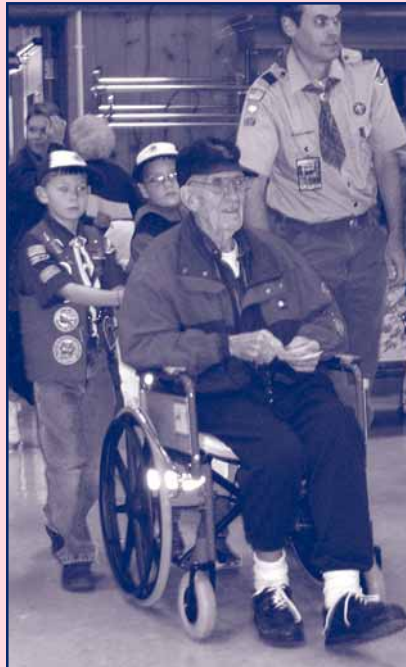
Counselors:

Mr. Charles Franklin, CDC, Chemical Dependency Counselor
Donald E. Johnston, MS, NCC, CMHC, CDS III, Coordinator-Relapse

Veterans Day Programs

The annual Veterans Day program was held Tuesday, November 11, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. in Chilson Hall, at the Orting facility. A crowd comprised of Soldiers Home residents, family members, Boy Scouts and members of many service organizations came to honor veterans of all wars.

McChord Air Force personnel presented the colors. Superintendent Jonathon Clontz welcomed the audience and introduced the guest speaker Lt. Tim Wade, Public Affairs Officer from the 62nd



Airlift Wing, McChord Air Force Base.

Residents Gully Collier lead the Pledge of Allegiance and Harold Moore read the Governor's Veterans Day Proclamation.

The Puyallup Community Band, directed by Rush Ward, played several toe tapping numbers and the Armed Forces medley.

Special recognition was given to all the WWII veterans living at the home, all of whom were recently registered with the WWII Registry of Remembrance in Washington D.C. Each resident was given a Remembrance certificate.



Retsil's 2003 Veterans Day Program began with the American Legion Post #182 presenting the colors, followed by David Riggs, a Veterans Home resident and the resident council president, leading the Pledge of Allegiance. The National Anthem was sung by Caroleen Smole along with several other patriotic songs. Chaplain Ron Hempel provided the Invocation, and Chaplain Heckathorne of the USS Carl Vincent, offered the Benediction. During the program, David Riggs was honored as the "Veteran of the Year" by the Kitsap County Veterans Coalition.

This year's guest speaker was Bruce Hein, a former Army Captain who served with the 82nd Airborne and also with Special Forces. He is a native of Spokane, Washington, and a graduate of the Washington State University with postgraduate studies at Gonzaga University. Hein is the founder of Team Vietnam, a team of volunteers who minister to the needs of the very poor of Vietnam. He has returned to Vietnam on numerous occasions in this capacity.

On November 10th, students from Klowhowya Secondary School grades 7-12th honored all veterans. Three residents from the Washington Veterans Home were chosen as distinguished guests for the event. The three honorees Ray Kerns; Russ Mills; and Melvin Haltunnen, were seated in front of the gymnasium while the students ran a respectful and honorable ceremony. Students made presentations on how Armistice Day became what we now honor as Veterans Day and on why Americans chose to make a pledge to our flag and Nation rather than Salute. The band, which has received many awards, played an outstanding arrangement of the Battle Hymn of the republic, followed by a jazz

ensemble performing a vocal tribute with patriotic songs.

After the assembly, the Veterans Home Honorees were invited to the cafeteria for lunch with the students. Throughout the meal a number of students approached the veterans and after introducing themselves, asked questions and then thanked them for their service to our country. The Veterans Home Residents enjoyed the time at school and felt a renewed sense of pride.



The Spokane Veterans Home celebrated Veterans Day on Sunday, November 9. U.S. Congressman George Nethercutt was the Guest Speaker. The 560th Band of the Northwest provided the music, and the 141st Air National Guard presented the colors.

The Army Air Guard barbecued a meal for residents and guests following the event. Local Veteran groups and Home staff members contributed to the funding for the barbecue. The residents invited guests. Members of the 141st and local high schools also acted as servers for the event.

Prior to Veterans Day, several students from the Centennial Elementary 5th Grade class visited the residents. They sang patriotic songs, read patriotic poems, and performed a short skit about the American flag.

In addition, the students made thank you cards, place mats, and wrote letters. The residents enjoyed watching the kids perform their skits and sing and had a wonderful day interacting with some younger members of the community.



Washington State Veterans Homes

Elks Present Reflections



During the holiday party in December the Aberdeen Elks (represented by Peggy and Roy Luxton) presented WA Veterans Home Superintendent Jerry Towne with a copy of the infamous drawing by Lee Teter of the Vietnam Wall called *Reflections*.

Moving Pictures Delight Residents



George Bodah, representing the residents of the WA Soldiers Home, accepts this moving picture donation. The lake photo lights up and appears to have gentle waves.

Donated by the VFW Auxiliary, this picture will be placed in the relaxation/therapy room. The Puyallup Cooties #3 also donated one.

DSHS Staffers Present Check to Spokane Veterans Home



The Community Services Division (CSD) is a network of 66 local offices in 6 regions across the state that provide economic and social services to people in need. Region 1 covers the 13 eastern counties in Washington State.

In November, while discussing their holiday festivities, a couple of suggestions were made, but as soon as someone mentioned the Spokane Veterans Home, there was unanimous agreement. During the holiday season, the Region 1 office presented the home with a \$506.75 cashier's check for a stereo system for all three dining rooms. In addition, bingo prizes (stuffed animals and word puzzles); board games, two body pillows, and a well-preserved collection of National Geographic magazines were donated.

Come Celebrate National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs invites community groups to visit residents at any of the state's three Veterans Homes during the week of February 8-14, 2004, when the Department of Veterans Affairs will celebrate National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week.

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week is an annual program designed to bring awareness of hospitalized veterans to the community. It is also an opportunity for community organizations to visit VA medical centers and nursing homes, to meet America's veterans and explore the numerous avenues of facility's volunteer programs available.

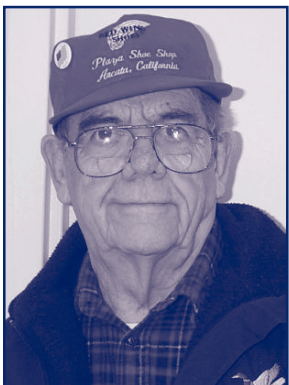
"The week of Feb. 14th is a great time to honor and thank our Veterans who are cared for in VA medical centers, outpatient clinics and nursing homes," said WDVA director John M. King. "Valentine cards can be made and delivered or young people can draw patriotic pictures. Be creative! Use your imagination and brighten the day of our veterans."

To schedule a visit for your group, please contact one of the following volunteer coordinators at a Veterans Home in your area:

- Washington Veterans Home - Retsil
Catherine Shaw - 360-895-4376
- Washington Soldiers Home - Orting
Lynn Zemke - 360-893-4511
- Spokane Veterans Home - Spokane
Shane Price - 509-344-5788

Straight Street Talk

With the Veterans Home Residents in Retsil. What do you think about the recent snow?



"It's cold!"
Ray Kern



"I remember once it snowed nearly 3 feet in Port Orchard. That was about 32 years ago."
William Cody



"I enjoy it as long as it is not too cold and I have a good comforter, hot apple cider and a warm fireplace to curl up in front of. I think we need a fireplace in the activity building."
Marla Dawson



"I love the snow as long as I am not out in it. I especially enjoy seeing everything white and watching it come down."
Gilbert Stuart



"It was fun to take my wheelchair and do donuts, although I almost ran over a pigeon on the sidewalk."
Matt Kogan



National Notes



Veterans Receive Cost-Of-Living Increase In Benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is including a 2.1 percent increase in the disability benefit payments that millions of veterans and dependents will receive at the end of December.

President Bush authorized an increase matching the increase in Social Security rates by signing into law the Veterans Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2003.

The new rates apply to benefits earned in December. VA benefit payments routinely are made at the beginning of the month following the one in which they are earned, but with the New Year's Day holiday, checks or direct deposits will generally be received on Dec. 31.

Most veterans and survivors will receive their increased VA compensation or pension through direct deposit, which VA encourages because of its speed and security.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Dec. 22, 2003

IOM Creates Web Site for Veterans

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) has created a new Internet Web site with information about a variety of military-related health issues.

The Web site, at <http://veterans.iom.edu>, has separate sections for health care issues affecting the last four major military conflicts - World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and the Gulf War. At each section, visitors can read electronic versions of IOM-produced reports or purchase publications.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Dec. 17, 2003

USA Today Honors VA's Web Site for Kids

A new Web site by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to teach children about the contributions of veterans has been selected by the editors of USA Today as one of the top educational Web sites for the week of December 1.

The Web page at <http://www.va.gov/kids> has information about VA, Veterans Day, scholarships, student volunteer opportunities, rehabilitative and special events for disabled veterans and links to veteran-related sites.

For younger students, VA's site has interactive activities such as puzzles, coloring pages, matching contests and age-appropriate language on a number of patriotic topics. For older students, there is information on volunteer programs, scholarships and more sophisticated educational resources, games and reference links. The teachers' section contains additional information, links and suggested classroom activities.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Dec. 5, 2003

Federal Legislation:

Veterans Health Care, Capital Asset, and Business Improvement Act of 2003 S1156

Legislation to improve and enhance provision of health care for veterans, to authorize major construction projects and other facilities matters for the Department of Veterans Affairs, to enhance and improve authorities relating to the administration of personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

Status: 12/6/2003 – Became Public Law No: 108-170.

- Allow the VA to enter into agreements with Medicare and Medicaid to expand health care options for veterans;
- Allow chiropractors to work in VA facilities;
- Establish an office to oversee medical experiments throughout the VA system;
- Provide benefits to veterans who participated in chemical and biological testing;
- Expand VA health care eligibility to Filipino veterans of World War II who are permanent US residents; and
- Require congressional notification before implementing any plan to close or shift VA facilities.
- Require development of a plan for meeting the future hospital care needs of veterans who reside in north central Washington.

Servicemembers Civil Relief Act

H.R. 100

Legislation to strengthen the rights and protections afforded military personnel called to active duty, including the provision of automatic 90-day stays for civil proceedings, protections against evictions due to nonpayment of rent, and limiting interest to 6 percent on outstanding loan balances.

Status: 12/12/03 – Presented to the President

Veterans Benefits Act of 2003

H.R. 2297

Legislation to expand and improve certain readjustment benefits for disabled veterans, their surviving spouses and children.

Status: 12/16/2003 - Became Public Law No: 108-183.

- Expand the GI Bill educational program to include self-employment training programs to help veterans run their own businesses;
- Make permanent the State Cemetery Grants Program;
- Reinstate a VA pilot program to provide vocational training to newly eligible VA nonservice-connected pension recipients;
- Increase the specially adapted automobile grant from \$9,000 to \$11,000;
- Increase the specially adapted housing grant from \$48,000 to \$50,000 for the most severely disabled veterans and from \$9,350 to \$10,000 for other severely disabled veterans;
- Add cirrhosis of the liver as a presumed service-connected disability for former POWs;
- Eliminate the requirement that a POW be held for 30 days or more to qualify for presumptions of service-connection for several specific disabilities;
- Expand benefits eligibility to those children with spina bifida born to Vietnam-era veterans who served in Korea near the demilitarized zone between October 1, 1967 and May 7, 1975;
- Make the VA home loan program for members of the Selected Reserve permanent;
- Adjust the funding fee charged to Selected Reserve home loan applications to the same amount as that paid by active duty service members; and
- Reinstate the Department of Veterans Affairs' vendee loan program.

Assured Funding for Veterans Health Care Act of 2003

HR 2318

Status: 7/21/2003 – Introductory remarks on measure.

Requires the Secretary of the Treasury to make available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for programs, functions, and activities of the Veterans Health Administration for FY 2005 130 percent of the amount obligated during FY 2003.

Adjusts the amount provided for fiscal years after FY 2005 based on the number of enrolled veterans and the number of other persons eligible but not enrolled who are provided care, multiplied by the per capital baseline amount for FY 2003, as increased by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index.

Prohibits the availability of such funds for: (1) construction, acquisition, or alteration of veterans' medical facilities (other than for repairs provided for before the date of enactment of this Act); or (2) grants for the construction of State home facilities for the furnishing of veterans' domiciliary, nursing home, and hospital care.

Disabled Veterans Get Health Care Priority from VA

All veterans with service-connected medical problems will receive priority access to health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) under a new directive.

The new directive provides that all veterans requiring care for a service-connected disability – regardless of the extent of their injury – must be scheduled for a primary care evaluation within 30 days of their request for care. If a VA facility is unable to schedule an appointment within 30 days, it must arrange for care at another VA facility, at a contract facility or through a sharing agreement.

The directive covers hospitalization and outpatient care. It does not apply to care for medical problems not related to a service-connected disability. However, veterans needing emergency care will be treated immediately.

The new provision is an extension of rules that took effect in October 2002 for severely disabled veterans. Under the earlier rule, priority access to health care went to veterans with disabilities rated at 50 percent or more. For the severely disabled, the priority includes care for non-service-connected medical problems.

The number of veterans using VA's health care system has risen dramatically in recent years, increasing from 2.9 million in 1995 to nearly 5 million in 2003. Although VA operates more than 1,300 sites of care, including 162 hospitals and more than 800 outpatient clinics, the increase in veterans seeking care outstrips VA's capacity to treat them.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Jan. 2, 2004

VA Broadens Benefits for Partial Loss of Breast

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is broadening its coverage of special monthly compensation for women who suffer loss of breast tissue related to their military service.

The new regulation replaces a policy that limited the special compensation to women veterans losing one or both breasts.

The new rule liberalizes the benefit to cover those losing 25 percent or more tissue from a single breast or from both breasts in combination. It includes loss by mastectomy or partial mastectomy, or following radiation treatment.

Payments retroactive to Jan. 1, 2003, may be made to eligible women. Women veterans with service-connected breast tissue loss who are not receiving the special monthly compensation may contact VA to find out if they are eligible under the new provisions.

The current special compensation rate of \$81 monthly for breast loss is in addition to the underlying disability compensation for a condition arising or worsening while in the military.

In addition to breast tissue loss, special monthly compensation rates also apply when a veteran loses one or more of the senses of sight, hearing and speech, experiences loss of a reproductive organ or its use, or suffers severe injuries such as loss of limbs.

Base rates of disability payments before special monthly compensation generally range from \$104 to \$2,193 per month for a single veteran depending on the degree of disability.

The breast benefit provision was included in the Veterans Benefits Act of 2002. In enacting the provisions, President Bush and Congress recognized the physical, emotional and financial challenges women face as they return to health and acknowledged their need for increased medical attention.

The rule is the latest in a series of changes that have improved VA's services to women veterans, including changes to make it easier for women to establish service-connection for gynecological and breast disorders and to provide more consistent evaluations.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Oct. 20, 2003

VA to Survey Gulf War Veterans' Health

Veterans of the first Gulf War recently received a letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) asking them to take part in a survey about their health.

The survey, called the Longitudinal Health Study of Gulf War Era Veterans, is a follow-up to one conducted in 1995-1996 on the health of 30,000 veterans of the 1990-1991 Gulf War.

A letter signed by Principi was sent to veterans explaining the study's purpose and procedures for enrolling and encouraging their participation, whether or not they took part in the original survey or served in the Gulf War theater.

Participation is voluntary. Veterans fill out a detailed survey with questions about general health, functional status, chronic medical conditions, unexplained multi-symptom illnesses, doctor and hospital visits and treatments. All information is confidential.

Dr. Han K. Kang, director of VA's environmental epidemiology service, who conducted the earlier study, will lead the research effort.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Dec. 15, 2003

VA, Women Legislators and DAV Support Veterans History Project

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is joining forces with the National Foundation for Women Legislators (NFWL), the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Library of Congress to increase national awareness of the Veterans History Project.

Women elected officials from every state and territory in the nation will serve as team leaders in NFWL's "Heart to Heart" program to record interviews with veterans for presentation to the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project. VA will assist NFWL in locating veterans to be interviewed and will provide local public affairs support. DAV is encouraging its members to interview their fellow disabled veterans or to allow a volunteer to interview them.

Team leaders will focus on interviewing World War II veterans during the period Nov. 1, 2003, through Feb. 24, 2004. Afterwards, they will also interview veterans of Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf war, the war on terrorism and all other conflicts.

Congress created the Veterans History Project in 2000. The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress is collecting and preserving audio- and videotaped histories, along with documentary materials such as letters, diaries, maps, photographs and home movies. They will be available on-line for review by veterans, their families, researchers, historians and future generations of Americans.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Nov. 14, 2003

✓ Mark Your Calendar

VAAC Meeting Schedule

March 11, 2004 - Bellevue

May 13, 2004 - Aberdeen

June 10, 2004 - Tri Cities

September 9, 2004 - Spokane

November 18, A 2004 - WA Veterans Home, Retsil

Contact Cyndee Baugh 360-725-2153 or
cyndeeb@dva.wa.gov for more information.

Hats Off



Teresa Underwood (center), receives a certificate of appreciation from Mark Mascho (right), Pierce County Veterans and Beth Augustine (left) veterans service supervisor with WorkSource Auburn Affiliate. Underwood provided cloth bags containing hygiene items to men and women veterans during the Fall 2003 Standdown in Tacoma.

Veterans attending the Pierce County Northwest Veterans Standdown in Tacoma last Fall were beneficiaries of special packets containing sensible things, like socks, shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, facecloths, razors and other hygiene items. Packed in easy to carry cloth bags, 150 men and women received the individually prepared bags, all thanks to Teresa Underwood, a single mother of three and employee at the Employment Security WorkSource office in Auburn.

But, these packets are not Teresa's main priority in community involvement. For a number of years, her passion has been providing kids with school supplies. She started out by taking supplies anonymously to a couple of schools her kids attended, and by fall of 2003, Teresa is up to about 300 packets being delivered to elementary and middle schools in her area.

Her involvement with the Standdowns started when she learned there was going to be a dental clinic van to provide dental care to children; a perfect place to provide kids with her school supply packets. From there, it just seemed natural to her to find a way to help the parents, also. Thank you, Teresa Underwood, from WDVA.

VOLUNTEERS...continued from page 1

party on December 15 in the nursing care facility. Santa also handed out cards, each with a \$5.00 bill. There was plenty of food and a banjo concert to entertain all the residents.

The Pioneer Valley Home School Band presented a concert in Chilson Hall on December 17th. The residents enjoyed listening to the music by a number of talented children.

Holiday Gift bags, for residents to receive during their parties on the 23rd, were stuffed with the many gifts donated from Fort Lewis and various veteran's service organizations. Additional items were purchased from the \$6,000 donated to the Holiday Gift Fund.

The dessert table was full of all kinds of cookies and cakes donated by the Puyallup Church of Jesus Christ LDS members who also helped serve during the party.

The Charisma School of Dance performed in the evening, showing their talents in ballet, jazz and tap.

Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived at the end of the day to distribute the gift bags and wish everyone a joyous holiday.



Many volunteers helped stuff gifts into holiday bags.



The Puyallup Elks provided refreshments and servers for the party.



A resident's nephew played some tunes on his violin.



Puyallup Church of Jesus Christ LDS members donated all the desserts for the Orting parties.



Karin Montague delivered gifts to the Spokane Home that the Visitors Bureau gathered for each resident.



The Young Marines brought in stuffed animals.



Volunteers helped serve refreshments.



The American Legion Aux members helped at all three veterans homes.



Mr. & Mrs. Claus (Roy & Peggy Luxton) visited the Retsil residents.



The Charisma School of Dance performed in the evening at Orting.